CHAPTER VIII

THE KAREN VILLAGE-HOUSE

The Karen on the plains live in houses of Burmese construction, which are therefore outside the scope of this work. In the Pegu Hills we find the single-structure village, which seems to have been the characteristic Karen dwelling from early times. It might be described as a bamboo apartment-house on stilts, accommodating on the average from twenty to thirty families. It is spread out on one floor, and each family occupies not one "flat" but a room, called in Karen "deu," which faces a central corridor running the length of the barrack.

Such a village, "th' waw," is usually rebuilt on a new site each year. The new location is sought by the local chief during the hot season, after conference with the elders and after the crops have been brought in. The place selected by the chief is fairly level, adjacent to the area to be cut over the coming year, and near a spring or stream that will not dry up during the hot weather. In the old days it was also necessary to choose a site that would be high and easily defended against raids. Before the decision is finally made, the chief must consult the auspices in the form of chicken bones, and if these are propitious and no laughing-bird *(Lanius)* calls "chet, chet," the men begin to cut bamboos with which to construct the village.

The bamboos selected for posts are twenty or more feet long and usually from four to six inches in diameter. They are set in the ground at intervals of four or five cubits (six to seven and a half feet). Holes are chopped through these large uprights at a height of from six to eight feet above the ground, and pins are thrust through on which bamboo girders of the same size are fastened by means of withes. At right angles to these girders and resting on them, other bamboo poles, slightly smaller in size, are tied at regular intervals of about a cubit to form the floor joists. The floor is made of large bamboos, split, flattened out, and secured to the joists by means of withes of the same material. It is six or eight feet above the ground, springy, and seamed with cracks, through which rubbish and wash water may be disposed of. As

19; Marshall M-5 (ca. 1910) 1922 APT Burma
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PART OF A MOUNTAIN KAREN VILLAGE, THAUNGWAINGYI DISTRICT

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STOCKADE AND GATEWAY OF THE VILLAGE, BE TEO, THAUNGWAINGYI DISTRICT

19: Marshall M-5 (ca. 1910) 1922 AP1 Burma
Karen AP7

342 313 the floor of the corridor is subjected to much heavier wear than that of any single room, it is made of round bamboos securely tied together.

Some six feet or less above the girders—my head has sometimes found that it was not fully six feet—another set of holes are hacked into the posts or uprights, through which pins are run to serve as supports for the "wall-plates," as the English residents of Burma call them, which run parallel with the girders below, and are secured in the same way. Other bamboos, parallel with the floor joists, are tied on the wall-plates at intervals of three or four feet. These beams give stability to the building. The tops of the posts may be only a little above the wall-plates, or they may run up several feet to the roof-plates, which are secured by pins and bamboo withes like the beams below. There may or may not be a roof-tie running across above the wall-plates. On the roof-plates rest the purlins or rafters that carry the interlocking half-sections of bamboo of which the roof is formed. This kind of roof may have supplied the model for the native round tile used so extensively in China and throughout the East. The bamboos to be used in the construction of the roof must be straight and three or four inches in diameter. They are split down the middle. The halves are laid close together with the concave sides uppermost, and the cracks between their edges are covered by a second row of halves laid with their convex sides uppermost. This overlapping of the concave by the convex halves gives a tight roof, the rain running down the troughs formed by the concave halves and off at the eaves. If one set of interlocking or overlapping bamboo "tiles" is not long enough to make the roof, a second set fits far enough under the higher set to catch the drip from above. Sometimes the roof covers the whole structure, including the corridor. In that case it has a ridge in the middle; otherwise the ridge may be over the row of posts next to that standing at the corridor. If the village-house stands in a windy location, where the rain would sometimes be driven up the roof, a small bamboo strip is tied at right angles across the upper ends of each set of "tiles." This is the more necessary because the roof is never steep, having a slope of not more than twenty degrees.

342 The walls of the village-house are constructed of flattened bamboo lengths nearly long enough to reach from the floor to the wall-plates. Three horizontal bamboo poles of small diameter are run through the posts, holes having been made for the purpose, and the flattened bamboo strips are woven between these. Such a wall con-

19: Marshall M-5 (ca. 1910) 1922 AP1 Burma
Karen AP7

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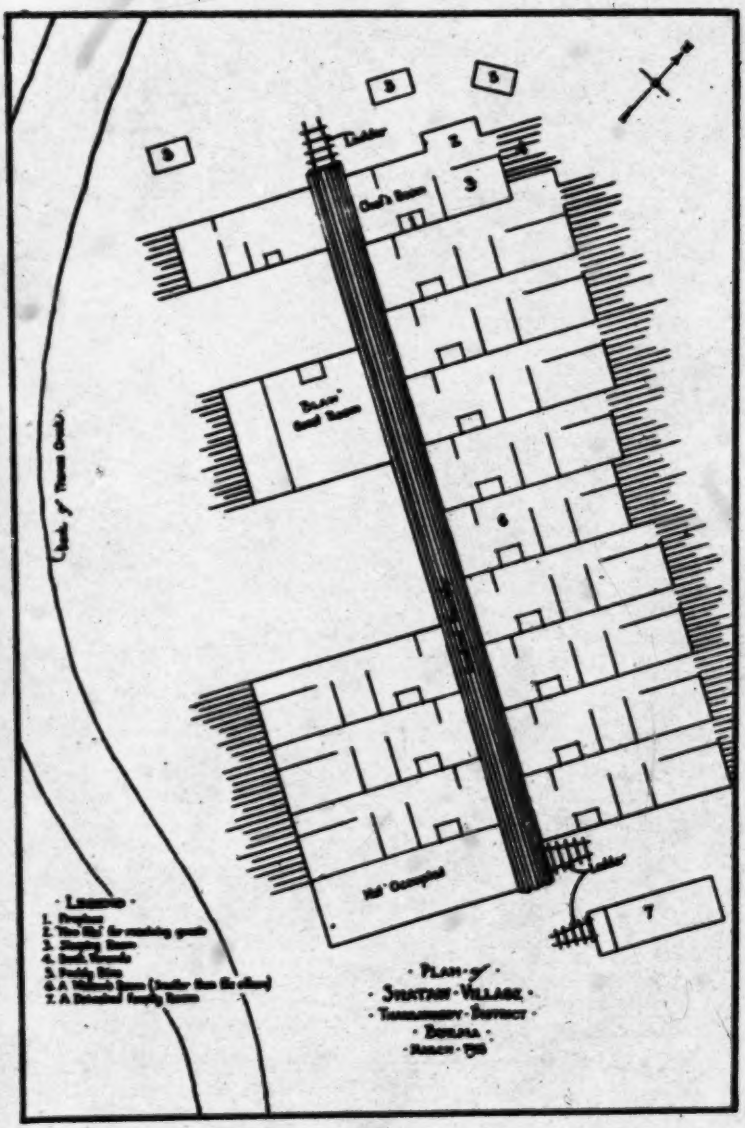

19: Marshall M-5 (ca. 1910) 1922 AP1 Burma
Karen AP7

342 tains numerous cracks and apertures, and may be easily removed to allow a corpse to be carried out. Similar partitions divide the sleeping apartment from the rest of the family-room. (See p. 65.)

361 When we come upon such a village, we may find it surrounded
342 by a stockade, as in the case of those in the Tharrawaddy district, where protection is thus obtained from tigers and other animals of the jungle and also from human prowlers. The stockade is made of bamboo poles, re-inforced by four rows of sharp pickets woven in and out of the fence. (See pp. 55, 57.) The gate of the stockade is constructed of large bamboos suspended from a cross-piece, so that they knock against one another when any one enters. Thus, the
[231] approach of a visitor is well announced. Once inside of the enclosure and past the multitude of yelping dogs which the villagers keep, the visitor comes to the ladder by which access is gained to the communal abode. The ladder, like everything else, is made of bamboo and has small loose rungs that can be easily removed. To an American it looks inverted, for it is narrow at the bottom and wide at the top. If the sun is high, heat is reflected from the burn-
342 ing hot bamboos. Mounting to the floor, one steps gingerly along,
352 fearing the round flooring may turn under him. The hollow bam-
354 boos resound, as each rubs and creaks against its fellows. The whole
415 population seems to be peering out of their doors or peeping through the cracks. The visitor enters a doorway, without its door. The first thing in the room that strikes his attention is the fireplace ("hpa k' pu"), which is only a little way from the entrance. The intervening space is largely filled with water-joints, rice baskets, and various household utensils. This is called the water-joint place ("hti pu law"). The fireplace consists of four upright bamboos fastened in the floor beams below and reaching to the cross-beams above. On the floor a rough box-like enclosure is built around the bottoms of the poles and filled in with dirt and ashes. Three round stones, or more in case the family has two pots boiling at once, give support to the cooking vessels, while the fire underneath is fed with dry bamboo fuel. About three feet above the ashes there is a shelf made of bamboo splints with their hard surfaces downward to the fire. The soot deposit on the under side of this shelf prevents the flames from doing any damage. Pots, plates, and other utensils find their convenient resting-place upon the shelf. One or two other shelves above this serve as catch-alls for herbs, baskets, tin lamps, unused food, large knives ("dahs"), and almost anything else that finds its way into the house. A hole cut in each

19: Marshall M-5 (ca. 1910) 1922 AP1 Burma
Karen AP7

342 352 354 415

of the two front poles of the fireplace a little way above the floor serves as a holder for the bamboo stick kept for stirring the cooking rice or other foods.

A smaller box of ashes in the center of the room supplies a fireplace for the warming of the family when the air is chilly of nights and mornings. It is then comfortable to sit about the fire, as one visits and tells stories.

373 314

The Karen have little use for artificial light. They get up with the sun and go to bed with the chickens. Often the flaring light of the bamboo fuel in the fireplace serves for light, while they entertain visitors or do odd bits of belated work. When they need something more than this, they use a cup containing crude earth-oil (petroleum is found in large quantities in Upper Burma) with a wick sticking out, or they make torches from the resinous oil of the "xaw" *(Dipterocarpus)* tree. These enormous trees when tapped yield a good run of oil. After each run of sap they scorch the hole and get another run. The oil is mixed with bits of dry wood or punk and moulded into sticks about a cubit long and an inch in diameter by putting it into joints of small bamboo. When it has dried, it is wrapped in palm or pineapple leaves and tied up with bark fibre. When needed for use, one end is loosened and applied to the fireplace for lighting. It is then set on a rough stand fashioned out of wood, on which it rests in an oblique position and in this manner burns to the best advantage. Nowadays little tin lamps made by Burmese tinsmiths after the pattern of the old European lamps are in common use. These hold a cotton wick and give a little light and some smoke, as they have no chimneys.

A Torch with Its Stand

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Usually beyond the cooking place a small partition extends out about four feet from the wall, forming a little alcove and hiding from view the family sleeping-room. The latter is a small apartment not more than eight or ten feet each way and is supplied with either a few rush mats, such as the Burmans are in the habit

19: Marshall M-5 (ca. 1910) 1922 AP1 Burma
Karen AP7

342 352 574 342 of sleeping on, or a single large bamboo mat, besides a quantity of old clothes, blankets, pillows, and rags scattered about or hanging from the rough ends of the walls. At either the front or back of the large outer room, whichever is toward the east—the place of honor in a Karen house—is a raised platform called the "hso hko." This is about a cubit's height from the floor and has a mat on it worn shiny with much sitting. It is the place where guests are received, especially if they are people of note. Here against the wall are a few pillows, which may be half-round bamboos of giant size, that is, from eight to ten inches in diameter, or cloth pillows filled with fibre from the cotton tree *(Bombax heterophylla)*. The guest is invited to sit on the platform and to partake of the contents of the fragrant betel-box, which is sure to be hospitably pushed in front of him. The cradle usually hangs from the crossbeams in the middle of the room, being held up by fibre ropes, although occasionally elephant chains are called into use to give full measure of security. The cradle itself may be a blanket swung up at the four corners, or it may be part of the trunk of a large hollow tree. A basket-work cradle is scarcely ever found in old Karen homes.

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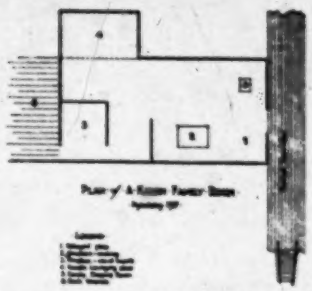

[85']

343 At the back of the family apartment the bamboo joists and flooring project several feet beyond the wall, forming a primitive back veranda where clothes are hung to dry; rice (paddy), fish, fruit, and vegetables are set out in the sun, and other domestic operations are carried on in private.

345 575 In a few Karen villages a young men's club-room ("blaw") is still maintained, but not in most. Where such a room exists, it does not differ in general appearance from a family-room, except that it has no partitions. The hearth in the middle of the space serves as a social fireside on cold mornings and evenings. At the east end a raised dais extends the width of the room, being used both for reception and for sleeping purposes. Guests, unless closely related to some family in the village, usually sleep here, except when, as a mark of respect, they are invited to sleep in a room apart on the "hso hko" with the men of the house. Women guests sleep in the family sleeping-room together with the women folk and children.

342 177 The old type of Karen village-house, such as we have been describing above, is being modified by contact with the Burmese

19: Marshall M-5 (ca. 1910) 1922 AP1 Burma
Karen AP7

way of building, and every stage of evolution from the village-barrack to separate family houses may be observed in Karen villages to-day. (See the illustrations on pages 94, 220, and 227.)

When an epidemic breaks out in a bamboo village-house, the inhabitants are not held there by the considerations that ordinarily prevent the dwellers in durable towns and cities from taking their prompt departure. At best the Karen village-house is habitable only for a year or two, was built by the combined efforts of the men of the little community from material of which the supply is abundant, and can be replaced quickly. When, therefore, disease begins to spread among the adjacent families, they scatter to the four winds with their most necessary belongings. Soon they gather and build another village on a new site and, having removed the last of their possessions from the old infected structure, leave it to decay or set it on fire.

When a village community is removing from one site to another, the women prepare food and liquor for the journey, pack up their belongings and leave them in the jungle near the path, if they do not wish to take them to the new place at once, and, finally, prepare the offerings to be left behind. These offerings consist of four balls of cooked rice, one white, another made black by being mixed with charcoal, and the other two colored red and yellow, respectively, by the admixture of colored pigments. These balls are placed on a large winnowing-sieve that has been woven by the women for the purpose at the very last. This tray and its offerings are carried to the central part of the house, where it is visited and spat upon by every member of the village. They then repeat the following lines:

> "Let all sickness and pain depart. Depart all colds.
> Go eat your black rice, your red rice.
> Go eat your betel and its leaves.
> Go eat with your wife and your children.
> Go stay in your house."

After thus addressing the spirits, the villagers take up their burdens, beat their drums and gongs, and set out for their new abode—a sight, indeed, for a motion picture camera.

On arriving at the new house, they do not enter it at once, but wait until some one has plucked from adjacent trees seven twigs growing upright, and with these has swept out the rooms. As the sweeper goes through the house he repeats the following incantation:

19: Marshall M-5 (ca. 1910) 1922 AP1 Burma
Karen AP7

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THE KAREN PEOPLE OF BURMA

"Go away, all evil spirits.
Depart, all devils.
We and our children are going to stay here.
Do not remain near. Go. Go."

The members of each family then take up the various household tasks, including the building of the fireplace. If this is not completed the same night, they tie up their wrists to keep their "k'las" from wandering away and finish it the next morning. This is done among the Karen of Siam.

342 In the preceding pages of this chapter I have attempted to give a description of the Karen village-house. I do not say "home," for the Karen language has no word for home. The house is, however, something more than the eating and sleeping place of the village families: it is the center of their domestic life and worship and as such possesses a certain amount of sanctity. From what has been said above, it is clear that the village structure displays no attempts at artistic decoration, and is not made attractive by any of the touches that give so rich a meaning to the word "home" among Christians. The Karen bamboo house, located in a tropical climate as it is, affords a certain amount of physical comfort: the breezes blow through its airy walls, and one may lounge and gossip within during the heat of the day and not experience great oppression. At night, when the cool air begins to make itself felt, the open fire with its cheerful blaze attracts the story-teller, while out in the shadows the youthful lover strums his harp, and the children and the dogs play about in sufficient quietness not to disturb their elders.

231 262 Everywhere common dogs are kept by the Karen. These are the ordinary smooth-haired pariah hounds, which are familiar to the traveler in all parts of the peninsula. Besides these there are the hunting-dogs, mentioned in the chapter on Hunting and Fishing.[1] Only in recent days have the Karen shown any inclination to raise cats. In the early days they professed not to eat these felines; but I can testify that, whatever their former antipathies to the cat tribe may have been in this regard, they no longer hesitate to eat the wild varieties of cats that are to be caught in the jungle. They also find rats palatable.

Pigs and fowls are the most common domestic animals among the Karen. Dr. Mason speaks of the pigs as being of the "small Chinese variety."[2] They are the property of the women and know

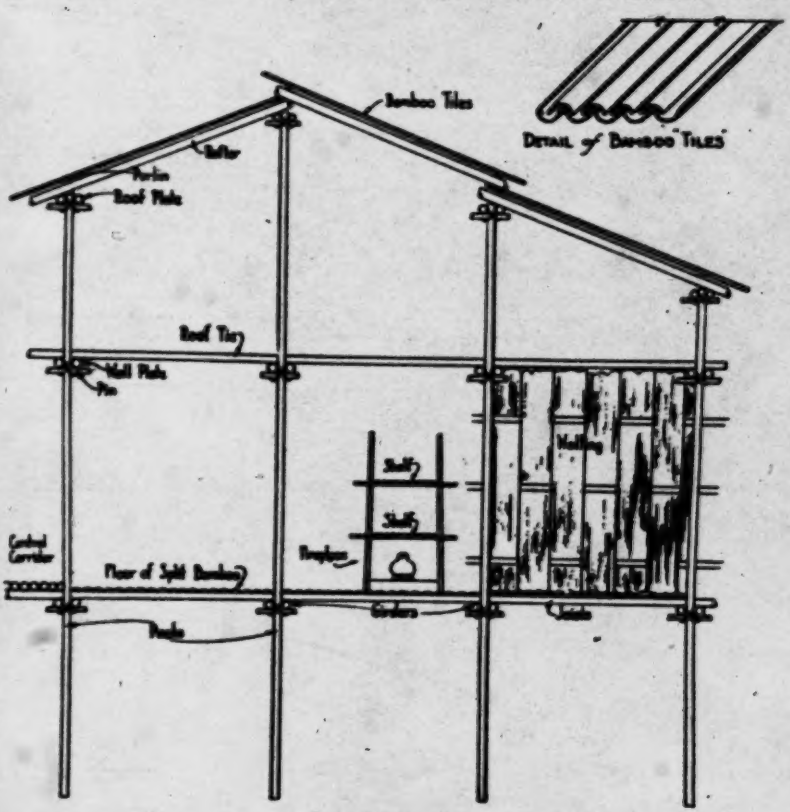
[1] See p. 162.

[2] *Journal, Asiatic Society of Bengal*, XXXVII, Pt. II, 129.

19: Marshall M-5 (ca. 1910) 1922 AP1 Burma
Karen AP7

their mistress's voice. When a woman dies, her pigs are killed in order that their "k' las" may accompany her into the next world. The fowls are of a variety not unlike the wild jungle-fowls found all over the country.

On the plains buffaloes have been extensively bred for use as draft animals and in cultivating the paddy-fields. As they are slow-going creatures the small native oxen, often mistakenly identified with the "sacred ox" from having a hump like the cattle supposed to have been used in ancient Israel, have largely superseded them for draft purposes. In the Toungoo Hills oxen are employed to some extent as pack-animals, especially by the Paku tribe. Both the Paku and their neighbors, the Mawnepgha, raise a few goats, while the Red Karen are breeders of ponies to some extent.



Side View of
A Bamboo Karen House
Kamamaung 1917

19: Marshall M-5 (ca. 1910) 1922 AP1 Burma
Karen AP7

duce and luggage from the town into the hill-country or to trading centers. They cover long distances, and before the recent war they received about eight annas (about twenty-four cents) a day for such work. In a few villages they raise oxen, which they train as pack-animals to carry grain and other produce of the hills to Toungoo or other markets. With two baskets slung on either side of a rough pack-saddle, these oxen can carry not more than one hundred and fifty or two hundred pounds each.

Karen men are experts at catching and training elephants and often become most excellent drivers for these intelligent beasts. Several travelers testify that Karen drivers seemed to be more gentle with, and careful of, their elephants than Burman drivers and acknowledge the pleasure which they derived from seeing the Karens handle their charges. Owners of elephants are usually employed by the Government Forest Department to draw logs out of the jungle to the streams, by the current of which they are floated down during the rainy season. This is a lucrative business, but the risk involved is large, because the elephants often sicken and need attention to restore them to working condition.

In some localities forest officers have employed Karens living in the hills to tend the adjacent forest reserves. But the Karen has a distaste for steady work under supervision, especially if the immediate overseer is a Burman. The latter usually does not hesitate to exhibit his feeling of superiority and to appropriate an undue share of the rewards. Only in a few instances have I known satisfactory results to be obtained through such an arrangement; but the few officers who did secure satisfactory results had a good word to speak for the Karen.

On the Plains

The Karen on the plains in Burma practice methods of cultivation like those of the Burmese, which have often been described. When the rainy season is about to begin in May the cultivator, if his land is at a distance from the village, carries thither a few bamboos and some thatch and builds a hut in his field. Here he lives during the cultivating season. The rains having softened the hard clay soil, he may resort to the very primitive practice of driving a few cattle or buffaloes around over a muddy place until they cut the ground with their sharp hoofs and thus prepare it, after a fashion, to receive the seedlings. Or he may use the method of

19: Marshall M-6 (ca. 1910) 1923 AP1 Burma
Karen AP7

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SGAW KAREN WOMEN CARRYING GRAIN IN LARGE BASKETS
Thayawaddy Hills

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KAREN HOUSES ON THE PLAINS

19: Marshall M-5 (ca. 1910) 1922 AP1 Burma
Karen AP7

286

A KAREN GIRL AT A BURMESE LOOM
This loom, which has a frame and is more easily operated than the Karen loom, is in common use among the Karen women on the plains.

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342

THE KAREN LOOM
This loom is simplicity itself. The airy construction of the Karen family-room is shown in this picture.

19: Marshall M-5 (ca. 1910) 1922 AP1 Burma
Karen AP7

764 524 dry supplies. The members of the party who are impersonating women, go under the houses and pretend to catch fish in their nets. By such methods they manage to gather all they can carry of fruit, vegetables, and other kinds of food, which they consume on their return to the place where the funeral is being held. This ceremony is performed more frequently when the bones of the deceased are exhumed than at the time of his death.

764 761 After the ordinary daylight observances and the chanting of the poems in the evenings have been completed, the body is removed through an opening made for the purpose in the side of the [342] house and is carried to the place where it is to be burned or buried. In the olden days it was usual to burn the body, but latterly burial is the common practice. The children used to be confined or tied [859] up at home during the removal of the corpse. This was to prevent their being scared by the gruesome sight, thus causing their shades or "k'las" to withdraw from their bodies and make them sick, or to keep their "k'las" from being enticed to follow that of the dead person with the same result.

764 775 In Siam three beds of leaves and twigs are made along the path to the place of burning, the bearers stopping at these piles as though to put down their burden and rest, but allowing it barely to touch the bed when they raise it again and go on.

In those cases in which burning is resorted to, the body is placed upon a pile of fagots three or four feet high and more wood is piled on top. Dry bamboo torches are applied at two or more places and, after the fire is blazing, the body is pierced with long sharpened bamboos to allow the juices to exude and so hasten the process of incineration. Before the body has been wholly consumed, charred pieces of the bones and particularly of the skull are raked out, held near the fire, and addressed with the words: "If you are hot, sit by the fire." After this water is poured over them and they are told, if cold, to bathe and drink water. These injunctions to the bones again illustrate the curious conception on the part of the Karen that the conditions prevailing in the next world are just the reverse of those existing in the present one.

If the full funeral rites have been performed, the bones are ready to be deposited in the family burial-ground. If, however, the cremation has taken place before the performance of the full ceremonies, the bones are usually placed in a basket or wrapped in a cloth and taken home to be used again when the full rites are celebrated. This carrying home of the relics and celebrating a funeral

19: Marshall M²8 (Ca. 1910) 1922 AP1 Burma
Karen AP7

342

A Hill Village in Transition
The family rooms have become separate buildings, each with its own ladder.

361

A Karen Village on the Plains
The Karen do not set their houses in an orderly arrangement, but each man builds where he likes within the village plot. The taller trees are cocoanut-palms, the others are "toddy-palms." Notice the pots put up to catch the sap from which the toddy is made.

19: Marshall M-6 (ca. 1910) 1922 AP1 Burma
Karen AP7

the purpose of improving the conditions and keeping their crops from being ruined. Failure to observe this custom brings disappointment ("t' kle t htwa"), for one's labor will be worse than useless. On the plains, where they prepare a dirt threshing-floor after the Burman style, it used to be prohibited to drive a cart across it or to walk on it with shoes on. In other sections, where the threshing is done on a great mat, no one may step on it but the members of the family who take part in the work. The succulent shoots of vegetables, which are grown with the paddy, must not be cut with a sharp knife or other instrument, inasmuch as cutting would endanger the "k'la" or life principle of the paddy and scare away the demons that preside over the fields. Both the vegetables and their shoots, the latter being largely used for greens, must be plucked with the fingers. Another tabu prevents the eating of flesh during harvest-time. Any family who should transgress this precept would find, it is believed, that their supply of rice had vanished from the storage bin. [262]

The following examples of tabus relating to domestic animals may be cited. If a sow or bitch has a litter composed only of females, they must all be killed. When less than three chicks are hatched from a nest of eggs, they must be killed. So also must the chick whose down dries fast to the feathers of the mother hen. A crowing hen is likewise doomed to death. These phenomena are supposed to be signs of weakness in the creatures concerned, for which some offended demon is responsible. Such weakness must not be allowed to spread.

Certain tabus contribute to preserve the integrity of the family through the female line. One of these prevents any outsider from entering a house where the family is celebrating the "Bgha" feasts. Indeed, a tabu debars from such gatherings the men who have married into the family, while those who are privileged to attend must remain in the house during the performance of the rites.

On the plains, where the Karen villagers build separate houses after the manner of the Burmans, persons are forbidden to drive their carts through the village road close enough to the houses to bump against the supporting posts. This tabu, which, in the eyes of a Westerner, partakes of the nature of a town ordinance, is enforced upon the offender by the imposing of a fine, namely, four annas in money or a fowl, payable to the heads of the household con-

19: Marshall M-5 (ca. 1910) 1922 AP1 Burma
Karen AP7

784 177 342 cerned. In the hills the money is put in a hole in the bamboo ladder leading into the house or, in lieu of a money payment, the fowl is hung under the house. Some persons, who have received the fine in the latter form, have shown a prejudice against eating it. I have been told that the British Government officials have upheld this tabu, when the collection of the fine has been resisted by the offending party.

784 551 Perhaps there is no more widespread tabu among the Karen people than that of personal names.[10] I have known some individuals for years without knowing their names and have used the common expedient of calling them by the name of their eldest son. A man who served as our cook for years in the Baptist school at Tharrawaddy I knew only as "Ba Gyaw's father;" although I did finally discover his own personal name. For a boy to mention his father's name is almost equivalent, according to Karen ideas, to the son's wishing his parent's death; for the spirits, learning the latter's identity, might destroy him. Instead of speaking of his wife, a man will talk of the mother of his children, or of his oldest child whose name he may think it safe to mention. Not long ago a young man of good education, who was engaged in filling his blank application for a marriage certificate, was confronted with the fact that he was unable to give his mother's name. Not infrequently parents bestow opprobrious names on their children, in order to deceive the demons into thinking them too unworthy to be molested.

782 787 823 During the month of July, when the streams are in flood, the people observe the tabu of the rising and falling of the waters ("ta dü ta htaw ta law"). They refrain from labor, make an offering of a fowl all of one color on the path near a stream, and utter the following prayer: "O Lord of the great water and the small water, of the oceans and the lakes. We are offering you a large sweet fowl and sweet rice. Flow in your own banks as usual, so that we shall not be drowned or fall into the water to be devoured by crocodiles and dragons. Watch over us on our journeys, eat our offerings, and do not molest us." They then examine the fowl's bones and the gall-bladder of a pig, and, if the omens are favorable, they swim the stream three times. In case no mishap occurs, they believe that their offerings have been acceptable and that they will prosper. If the omens are not propitious the first time, they try

[10] See Chapter XVIII on Birth Customs and Childhood, p. 178.

101 Many of them [i.e. Karen, Analyst] have Karen AP7
[797] embraced Buddhism and more especially Christianity. The American Baptist Mission has been most successful among them and draws trainees for the missionary and teaching profession from the Karen. In the distant hill districts the tribes can still be found in their original civilization. There they still build their crude bamboo
[342] huts, often one for several families (21). The

21. Ferrars, ibid., p. 149.

Karenni (meaning red Karen) who live beyond the British administration zone, but still under British control, live together with a few kindred tribes in a separate little state in the southeast corner of the Southern Shan States--1911: 19,008. They are, without question, least touched by civilization. Christianity has won
[771] over only a few converts among them; the demon cult is still the predominant religion. The tall
361 masts, which are erected at sowing and harvesting
[782] time as sacrificial posts for the spirits, indicate from afar the proximity of a Karenni village. A sturdy fence of bamboo wickerwork usually encloses the village itself, and most of the time /Figure 6--Interior of a Taungyo house in Myinka, near Kalaw./ the individual houses are also
343 fenced in (Plate VII, 1). The grain sheds, which are small pile structures, stand some distance away, usually outside the village fence because of fire hazard. This is a custom which can be observed among all Indochinese mountain tribes. This practice is all the more surprising since in the days when raids, robberies, and tribal feuds were very frequent just the most valuable possessions were kept outside the fort-like village enclosures. The grain sheds were secured only by a wooden bar and were accessible to everybody; it was even customary to keep also other valuable
343 possessions in these huts. However, the grain shed
778 seems to have been revered as holy; it is said that

343 778 thefts from /216/ the grain sheds are extremely rare (22).

[171] 22. T.C. Hodson reports this about the Naga, The Naga Tribes of Manipur (London, 1911), p. 42, in conjunction with McCulloch.

●342 The crudely built bamboo house (Plate VII, 2) has in front a veranda which is reached by a steep ladder; the roof extends over the former (23).

23. A short remark about the Karenni house by A. Fischer, Zeitschrift für Ethnologie /Journal for Ethnology/, Vol. 35 (1903), pp. 991 ff.; the typical veranda of the house which has been reproduced here is completely damaged.

The occupants remain here during the daytime, and here the women keep their weaver's looms and spinning equipment; sometimes one of those [534] large bronze drums (pasi), which the literature mentions so often hang here. They belong to the most highly prized possessions of the Karen, and represent a very substantial barter element for the purchase of wives and similar transactions. The interior of the house contains only one room. [354] In its center is the fireplace with a structure hanging over it. On a bamboo platform, which stands around the entire wall space, are dishes, baskets, etc. The sleeping accommodations, not separated from each other, are in the rear of the room. Ears of corn and millet spikes--the [273] latter are used as an ingredient in the brewing [251] of rice brandy, which plays an important part with all the mountain tribes and also the Shan-- hang from the roof rafters. In between, hang large pieces of pork.

342 The houses of the Padaung, another Karen
[301] tribe--1911: 8,516--are quite similar. The Padaung women represent an amusing ethnographical parallel to the African Massai, with their solid heavy brass ornaments and their tremendous collars. Sometimes the Padaung form a village
[621] community together with the Yimbaw-Karen (24)

24. About Yimbaw-Karen see UBG, I, 1, p. 524.

as in the villages of Naungswe near Mobye on the Nam Pilu. The place looked cleaner to me than the Karenni villages and their houses were better constructed (Plate VII, 3). A round awning covers the veranda; the single inside room is used for cooking, living, and sleeping. In
[354] the center are two fireplaces which are sunk into the floor; on both sides are sleeping accommodations. Alongside the wall the floor is raised to form a low platform where vessels and all sorts of implements are kept. At the rear, to
[514] the right, a bamboo screen, reaching half way to the ceiling, partitions off a kind of toilet which is an opening in the floor.

101 The Gaungto--(Sawng-tung-Zayein-) Karen--
161 1911: 4,981--belong to a tribal group where
582 more or less severe endogamic marriage rules limit the establishment of families, and this in turn has resulted in a steady decrease of the population. Consequently, one frequently finds in their villages a large number of old maids and bachelors who were unable to find suitable mates for themselves. For example, I counted in one little village, consisting only of six houses, not more than four married couples, and their families. In addition, there was one widow, and four girls and four bachelors who, because of lack of money or because of the marriage rules, had to remain single.

344 The bachelor house, a customary institution
883

344 883 with most of the Indochinese mountain tribes who have not been converted to Buddhism, Hinduism, or Christianity, is therefore much frequented. (Shortly before I visited the place it had burned down, together with other dwellings.) The architecture of this building differed from the other dwellings primarily by the height of the posts or the roof (25). It is mostly used by the young

25. Cf. Schurtz, ibid., p. 419. The Hosha of Formosa, in contrast to their customary style, build their club houses on piles: J.H. Arnold, "The Ascent of Mt. Morrison," Journal of the North China British Royal Asiatic Society 40 (1909), p. 61, with illustrations after pp. 50 and 60. --About the geographic spread of men's houses cf. Schurtz, ibid., pp. 108 ff. and passim. -- About the bachelor houses at the Naga and the Dravidian Oraon in Bengal: W. Crooke, Natives of Northern Indian (London, 1907) pp. 44, 77.

males from the beginning of the age of puberty on as sleeping and living quarters. In addition, it also serves as a guest house for out-of-town visitors and as an assembly place, a kind of city hall, for the men of the village.

342 The houses of the Gaungto-Karen (Plate VII, 4) are not particularly large. At one of the average houses I measured a length of 8 1/2 meters, which included 2 1/2 meters for the veranda awning and 1 1/2 meters for the rear round roof. A notched beam served as a stairway to the veranda which had no railing. The awning sloped down so far that one had to stoop low in order to be able to enter. The front east corner post is considered the /217/ principal post, where coconuts, bananas,

Akha AQ4 Karen AP7
Lahu AP13 Wa AP12

K 342 [354] etc. are offered as a sacrifice to the spirits. The fireplace in the center of the single inside room is sunken and rests on a structure made of four posts which rise from under the K [782] [776] floor of the hut. Small bamboo pipes containing rice brandy are kept for the house spirits at the entrance to the hut, on the roof, and be- K [787] neath the fireplace. A pig's skull, a pig's bladder, and a bundle of leaves, together with chicken bones which are used by all the mountain tribes for soothsaying, hang from the rafters. The piles under the house are joined together K [231] with crossbeams; the place is used at night as a stable for the buffaloes.

L 101 342 177 Of the tribes who live in the Southern Shan States, particularly in Kentung and the adjoining areas, the Lahu or Muhsö--1911: 18,103--and the kindred Kwi (26)--1911: 3,189--build

26. UBG I, 1 pp. 576 ff.

A 342 their houses either in the Shan style, or, sometimes in the style of the Wa or Yao; the Akha or Kaw (27) together with the AKo--1911: 37,300

27. Ibid., pp. 588 ff.

--have houses which are raised by low piles. Most of them have only one single overcrowded and neglected interior room.

W 101 Of more interest and importance are the Wa (28).

28. Ibid., pp. 493 ff.; about village and house layouts, pp. 498 ff., 503 ff. Also G. Drage, A Few Notes on Wa (Rangoon, 1907), pp. 34 ff.

A few of the tribes of the "tame" Wa live in Kengtung, Manglun and the adjacent Shan regions --1911: 14,674. Some of them, after embracing

31: Scherman--78 E-4 (no date) 1915 AP1 Burma

Shan AP11
Sino-Tibetan Peoples AE3
Karen AP7
Palaung AP10

Plate VI

1.

S
342
361 Namhkam, quarter of the Chinese Shan, Mixed style.

2.

House of the Chinese Shan in Wettaung, near Bhamo, upper Burma.

3.

Si
342 Intha houses, Inle Lake, southern Shan State of Yawnghwe.

4.

Lisu house in Pangsapyi, northern Shan State of Tawngpeng.

Plate VII

1.

K
342
361
411 Karenni village of Ngwedaung, Karenni States.

2.

Karenni house in Kwenlong, near Pekon southern Shan State of Mongpai (Burmese: Mobye).

3.

K
P
342 Padaung house in Naungswe, about 8 kilometers from Mongpai, the main town of the Shan State of the same name.

4.

Gaungto-Karen house in Takedu (shan Yanghota, Burmese: Tarudaw), southern Shan State of Mongpai (Burmese: Mobye).

Plate VIII

1.

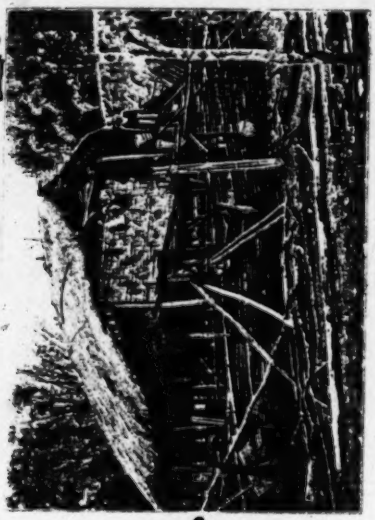
P
342 Palaung village in Namhsan, northern Shan State of Tawngpeng.

2.

Palaung house in Saraw, near Namhsan.

31:Scherman--83 E-4 (no date)1915 AP1 Burma
Karen AP7
Palaung AP10

K
342
[417]



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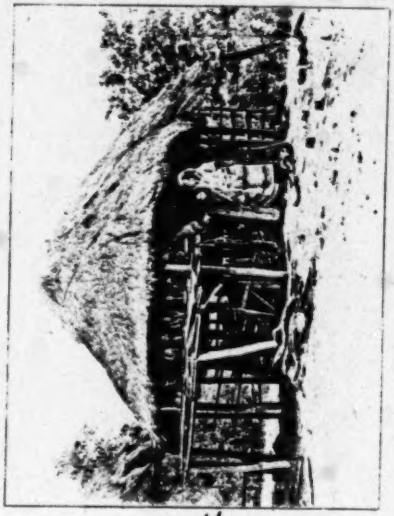

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K
342
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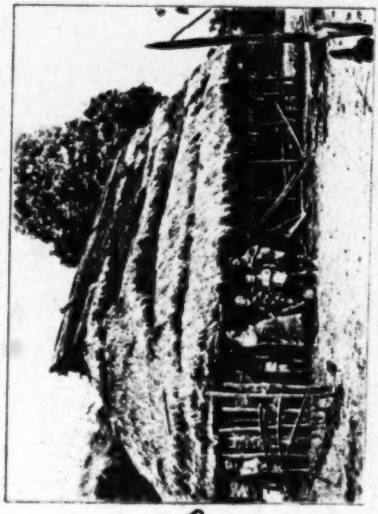

3

Plate VII

[For description see page 78, category 116. —Analyst]